

THE MILITARY FAMILIES
FINANCIAL SECURITY ACT

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 18, 2003

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Military Families Financial Security Act. This bill will ensure that the brave men and women who serve our country will not have to worry about losing the critical services their children need.

The men and women who serve in our Armed Forces are everyday heroes. I know about the valor of military families from my own experience as a military wife when my husband was stationed in Japan during the Vietnam War. As a wife and mother in a foreign country with two young children, I was truly grateful for the support of other military families. The most striking quality of these families was the sense of pride in serving our country even in a time of strife and stress. I can honestly say that I met extraordinary individuals in extraordinary circumstances.

The resilience and patriotism of military families is inspirational. Their unwavering courage in answering the call to serve our country is even more inspiring when one realizes that many of these men and women are leaving families back home. We must remember that many of our service personnel also answer to the title of "mom" or "dad." Just as these brave men and women are working to protect our Nation, we must likewise protect them and their loved ones through the laws and policies we enact.

In San Diego and around the country, many military families who have children with disabilities rely on assistance from the Federal Government to help cover the costs of health care, day care, and care for special needs. Eligible families receive Supplemental Security Income, or SSI, to ease the financial burden. However, these military families are in danger of losing this much-needed assistance because of a bureaucratic quirk. They face a unique risk of losing their benefits because service members can receive numerous types of additional pay that can increase their income. The Social Security Administration regards this extra pay differently than extra pay for non-military employment. Since eligibility for SSI is based on income, the difference of a few dollars can mean having health care or no care at all.

The Military Families Financial Security Act would change how the Social Security Administration calculates income to determine eligibility for Supplemental Security Income. This simple change in the treatment of income will keep families eligible for SSI benefits and resolve an existing disparity between military and non-military families.

In addition, the Military Families Financial Security Act would also expand SSI eligibility to disabled children who are born to or who apply for benefits while living with parents who are military personnel stationed outside the United States. Currently, children of military personnel stationed overseas are eligible for SSI if they received SSI while they were in the United States. Such an extension would eliminate the disparate treatment of children of military personnel who were born or became blind or disabled outside of the United States.

With our sailors and soldiers in harm's way, there is not a worse time for them to be concerned about whether loved ones are getting the care they need. This legislation offers them the peace of mind that comes with knowing their families will always have the critical support they need.

I urge my colleagues in Congress to act quickly in passing the Military Families Financial Security Act into law.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPRO-
PRIATIONS ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2691) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes:

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment offered by the gentleman from Washington, Mr. INSLEE, on the roadless rule. We have debated this general issue repeatedly in this chamber over a number of years. Amendments have been offered by well-intentioned members who are not informed about the specifics of the highly diverse units of the national forest system and the unique circumstances which characterize access in each of those forests, as well as the composition of the forestry resources in each unit.

The Superior and Chippewa National Forests, which are located in my congressional district, have undergone extensive study, review, adjustment in status and addition of acreage to roadless or not-cut status. Over the last forty years, these two national forest units, which represent well over 3.6 million acres of federal lands, have been subjected to the Wilderness Act of 1964, the RARE I and RARE II inventories, the old growth inventory, the passage of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Act of 1978, the result of which, in each case, has been removal from timber harvesting of tens of thousands of acres of forested land to be reserved for wilderness status, protected from timber harvesting and in which motorized travel is precluded in all but a very few instances.

In the aftermath of these actions to remove vast acreages from timber harvesting, and in light of management plans that the U.S. Forest Service is required to produce every five years, each of which has resulted in reduction of the allowable timber harvest, or some further complete withdrawal of land from timber harvesting, I see no need arbitrarily in the context of this straight jacket-like approach to which we are limited in the appropriation process, to impose further restrictions in a one-size-fits-all process.

Furthermore, the mapping required of these public lands has not been fully accurate, as evidenced in a ruling just this week by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, situated in Wyoming, that the maps produced by the Forest Service were flawed, the process

was rushed and the end result wrong. The court found that in developing the rule: "The Forest Service violated the National Environmental Policy Act and the Wilderness Act." The court further found that the promulgated rule was an "aggrandizement of power by the Forest Service in violation of an unequivocal Act of Congress and the United States Constitution."

I can assure my colleagues that, in the Superior and Chippewa National Forests, there are well over a million acres devoted to wilderness, vast areas for those who seek solitude and the restorative quality of the water and lands set aside from mechanized intrusion. Furthermore, the non-wilderness areas of these two national forests are well and carefully managed in a most professional and responsible manner in an open, public process by the U.S. Forest Service and I see no compelling case for converting additional thousands of multiple-use acres to wilderness in these two forests.

ON THE DEATH OF CELIA CRUZ

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 18, 2003

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, today, I mourn the death of my great friend, the music icon, Celia Cruz, who lost her courageous battle with cancer yesterday afternoon.

In fact, today, the entire world mourns.

After 50 years of her presence, influence and music, her loss is shocking to all of us, her dedicated fans.

Celia Cruz, whose music crossed ethnic, racial and cultural lines and earned her five Grammy's and two Latin Grammy's, was a true trailblazer. Her music was a unifying force, and her passion for a free Cuba was evidenced in both her music and her words.

Her commitment to a free Cuba went so far that, during a performance at the Summit of the Americas, she worked the following unforgettable lines into one of her songs: 'Mr. President, please make sure that my homeland Cuba is free once more.' Poignant and heartbreaking words that describe her love for Cuba, her commitment to a free and democratic Cuba, and her affection for her adopted homeland, the United States.

Celia Cruz mesmerized audiences for five decades with her exceptional singing talent and her wonderful charisma. She has been one of the single greatest influences on salsa music, recording more than 70 albums, and receiving more than 100 awards.

She was honored with a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame, and with streets named after her in New York, Mexico, Costa Rica and Miami, on the famous Calle Ocho. Celia has received honorary degrees from Yale, Florida International University, the University of Miami, and received the National Medal of Arts, the highest honor bestowed on an artist by the United States.

Celia Cruz was born and raised in the Santa Suárez neighborhood of Havana, Cuba. As a young girl, she spent much of her spare time entertaining her peers, friends, and neighbors by singing lullabies and melodies. In the 1940's, she officially began her musical career by singing on numerous Cuban radio programs. After studying at Havana's Conservatory of Music from 1947 to 1950, she joined

the legendary group La Sonora Matancera, and after several successful recordings, the group's music was in demand beyond the borders of Cuba.

When Celia left Cuba for the United States in 1960, her career blossomed and she became a household name. During her first decade in the United States, she recorded several albums with the great Tito Fuente, and together, they captured the hearts of nontraditional fans of salsa, a phenomenon known as 'the Salsa of the 70s.' Celia has also collaborated with other great Latin artists, including Johnny Pacheco, Willy Colón, and la Fania All Stars, as well as great American artists, such as Dionne (DEE-ON) Warwick, Patti Labelle, David Byrne, Gloria Estefan, and Wyclef Jean.

Celia Cruz's boundless energy transfixed generations of salsa fans and musicians. The powerful presence of music in her life could not have been expressed any better than in her own words: in an interview, she once said that she was 'born with the music inside of her.' And, by God, she expressed the music 'inside of her' until the very last day of her battle with cancer.

I was introduced to Celia Cruz's music at an early age, and enjoy her work and dance to her music now, more than ever. As the former Mayor of Union City, New Jersey, I was honored to recognize her achievements and contributions during an awards ceremony almost two decades ago.

On that day, and until her death, Celia Cruz, the Queen of Salsa, the music icon, the star, remained down-to-earth, people-oriented, and was loved by everyone for her music, her passion and her style. She was one of the few bridges that crossed cultural and racial divides.

Celia Cruz's death has left a void in the lives of so many, but her music and words live on, as she leaves behind a legacy on so many levels. I will never forget the famous lines from a recent song, 'La Vida es un Carnaval—No hay que llorar,' which means, life is a carnival, you don't have to cry. So simple and so true.

And just like Celia would end her songs with the impulsive and unique AZUCAR! or sugar, I end tonight by saying our memories of you, Ceilia, are as sweet as sugar. You will never be forgotten, and you will always be missed.

HONORING ROBERT P. "BOBBY" KOCH ON HIS PROMOTION TO PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE WINE INSTITUTE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 18, 2003

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Robert P. "Bobby" Koch and congratulate him on his recent promotion to the position of President and Chief Executive Officer of the Wine Institute. Bobby is no stranger to many of us. He has long been the voice of the Wine Institute here on Capitol Hill, and prior to that he was an employee of this body, serving Representatives Coelho and GEPHARDT, ending his service in this House as Mr. GEPHARDT's Chief of Staff.

It is a clear sign of Bobby's ability that the Board of Directors of the Wine Institute did not

hesitate to appoint him to replace John DeLuca as President and Chief Executive. I know that they will not be disappointed that they have put their trust in Bobby's capable hands. The wine business is a \$33 billion a year industry in California and it is a crucial part of the state's economy. An industry this large needs a clear, united voice both here in Washington and across the country, and I know that the Wine Institute will continue to provide this voice under Bobby's leadership. Bobby will always be the first person I turn to when I need to know the viewpoint of the industry.

Bobby has not limited his contributions to California's wine industry. He has been an active member of his community for many years. Bobby is a member of the USDA Agricultural Policy Committee for Trade, and also serves on the Boards of the National Commission Against Drunk Driving, the Council on American Politics at George Washington University, the Congressional Wine Foundation, and the California State Society. He has also worked tirelessly to raise millions of dollars for worthy causes, including efforts to cure Crohn's disease and colitis and the National Children's Hospital.

He has managed to accomplish all of this at the same time that he and his wonderful wife, Doro Bush Koch, have raised a family of four great children. I am sure that he considers his family to be his greatest accomplishment of all.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly a pleasure for me to be able to honor the accomplishments of Bobby Koch, a great leader for the Wine Institute and a dear friend as well. I wish him many more years of success as he takes on this exciting and challenging new role.

HONORING LATE LEADER OF SOUTH LAKE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 18, 2003

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Howard Stockton of Clermont, Florida. The long time leader of the South Lake Chamber of Commerce in my Fifth Congressional District of Florida, Mr. Stockton passed away this weekend after a long battle with cancer.

Howard Stockton will be greatly missed by all who knew him and will be remembered as a kind, caring man with vigor and enthusiasm, and as a consensus builder with amazing ability and talent.

As many current Floridians, myself included, Mr. Stockton was not a native of Florida but made it his home. An Ohio native, a graduate of Kent State University, a former teacher and administrator, Mr. Stockton retired to Florida with his wife in 1989 to be closer to his two sons.

However, his penchant for activity and his well-known energy and zest would not allow him to simply live the tranquil life associated with retirement. He joined the local Loins Club and the South Lake Council for the Arts and then took his community activity to the next level by accepting the position of executive director of the Clermont Area Chamber of Commerce.

Under his leadership, the strength and membership of the chamber grew. He guided it from a small city group into a regional organization nearly three times its original size. The success of the South Lake Chamber of Commerce is a reflection of Mr. Stockton's charismatic personality and his remarkable ability to bring people together.

We in the State of Florida and in the South Lake Chamber are both very fortunate that Mr. Stockton was able to share his extraordinary abilities with us and at the same time very saddened by the loss of such a wonderful man.

It has been said that, "When you met Howard, you felt like you had met a friend." we will all miss our friend.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERNIE FLETCHER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 18, 2003

Mr. FLETCHER of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, July 16, 2003, had I been present for rollcall vote No.'s 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374 and 375, I would have voted the following way: rollcall vote No. 368—"aye," rollcall vote No. 369—"aye," rollcall vote No. 370—"no," rollcall vote No. 371—"aye," rollcall vote No. 372—"aye," rollcall vote No. 373—"aye," rollcall vote No. 374—"aye," and rollcall vote No. 375—"aye."

ON REMEMBERING CELIA CRUZ

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 18, 2003

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today, the Latin music world mourns the passing of "The Queen of Salsa," "La Reina de la Salsa", Celia Cruz, who passed away 43 years and one day after she left her homeland, Cuba, for the United States. I am honored to recall how Celia Cruz, the world-renowned performer, and I crossed paths at different moments. She sang at my first victory party, celebrating my win as the first Cuban-American woman to win a seat in Congress in a special election in 1989. She accompanied me to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, when I went to visit the Cuban rafters detained on our base, to see for myself their living conditions and physical well-being. I will never forget how she kissed the ground when our plane landed and how she sang that day to the Cubans held there with the passion and love of a true native who has been presented the chance of standing on her native soil, even though poignantly, it was on our base, after so many years. She was also a friend to the Republican Party, performing at the 2000 Republican convention in Philadelphia, where President George W. Bush accepted the nomination to the presidency.

In her long career, Celia Cruz never forgot the country of her birth, evoking Cuba in every performance, but never returning to her homeland. She was a political exile who never returned to Cuba, not even when her father died, denied entry by Fidel Castro, who was